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S-E-C-R-E-T

IDEA-0634

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COVER SUPPORT TO OPERATION NIMBUS

I. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE:

The objective of Operation NIMBUS is photographic and electronic reconnaissance of selected military and intelligence targets on the Island of Cuba. The instrument to be used to accomplish the objective is the U-2 aircraft.

II. GENERAL OPERATIONAL COVER PLAN:

Under U.S. Government contract, Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, the ostensible owner of the U-2, is ferrying the aircraft from Burbank, Cal., to Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico. From Ramey AFB it was to fly a geodetic re-survey mission of the Atlantic missile range used in conjunction with firings from Cape Canaveral.

The above plan principally applies when the U-2 is located, or involved in an incident, outside the U. S. continental limits. For training/staging base activities and for emergency landings at bases within the continental United States, there is an alternate story as indicated in paragraphs IV., B. & C. below.

III. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS OPERATION THE FOLLOWING AREAS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE:

A. Friendly:

Puerto Rico  
Jamaica  
Bahamas  
Haiti

B. Hostile:

Cuba  
Dominican Republic

IV. PERTINENT COVER STORIES TO BE DISSEMINATED BY RESPONSIBLE ACTION OFFICES ARE INDICATED BELOW:

A. General Press and Publication Inquiries

1. Cover Story

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The U-2 is a Lockheed owned aircraft, being operated under a U.S. Government contract. It is presently flying out of Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico, on a geodetic re-survey mission of the Atlantic missile range used in conjunction with firings from Cape Canaveral.

(N.B. - All necessary documents have been accomplished to show Lockheed as the owner of the U-2; the test pilot is documented as a civilian employee of Lockheed; the aircraft is devoid of AF markings, carrying only a FAA experimental tail number and the Lockheed name stenciled on the U-2.)

2. Responsible Action Offices

DOD; Lockheed Aircraft Corp.

3. Coordinating Office Prior to Release

CIA

B. Activities at Training/Staging Bases

1. Cover Story

The U-2 is a Lockheed owned aircraft, flown by a Lockheed civilian employee from Edwards Air Force Base, Cal., engaged in fuel consumption, range and other studies pertinent to a continuing modification program under a contract with the USAF.

2. Responsible Action Offices

DOD; Lockheed Aircraft Corp.

3. Coordinating Office Prior to Release

CIA

C. Emergency Landings at Bases Within Continental U. S.

1. Cover Story

Same as IV.-B. above, if story is necessary.

2. Responsible Action Offices

DOD; Lockheed Aircraft Corp.

3. Coordinating Office Prior to Release

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D. Incident over Friendly Territory Outside U. S. (See III A)

1. Cover Story

Civilian test pilot, an employee of Lockheed, will state that he is ferrying the U-2C from Burbank, Calif. to Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico, from where he was to fly a geodetic re-survey mission of the Atlantic missile range used in conjunction with firings from Cape Canaveral.

(N.B. - Instructions to the pilot will be to secure the aircraft through local assistance to prevent damage and pilferage; contact local U. S. Consulate to assist him in communicating with his emergency contacts (1) Mission Control Center or (2) Lockheed Corp.)

2. Responsible Action Office(s)

DOD; Lockheed Aircraft Corp.

3. Coordinating Office(s) Prior to Release

CIA

E. Incident over Hostile Territory

1. Cover Story

In this instance, the pilot is under strict instructions to destroy the aircraft at sea. If he falls into the hands of Castro forces, he will repeat the story given in Para. IV, D. above and only add the additional information of his name, date of birth and his address in the U. S.

2. Responsible Action Office(s)

Department of State

3. Coordinating Office(s) Prior to Release

CIA

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F. Communist Protest without Incident

1. Cover Story

All interested departments of the U. S. Government, if queried, will deny knowledge of any such overflights of Cuba.

2. Responsible Action Office(s)

Not applicable, since all departments will deny knowledge of Cuban overflights.

3. Coordinating Office(s) prior to release

Not applicable

- V. The following named individuals are being furnished a copy of this document for purposes of internal coordination with cleared personnel within their respective departments:

Brig. Gen. Edward G. Lansdale for Mr. Roswell Gilpatrick  
Mr. Thomas Barrett for Gen. Maxwell Taylor  
Mr. Joseph Scott for Mr. Roger Hilsman  
Col. Stanley W. Hedril for Central Intelligence Agency  
Col. Douglas Steakley for Dept. of Defense, Joint Recon Center  
Lt. Col. Cameron B. Benson for Department of the Air Force  
Col. Leo S. Geary for HQIC-5, Special Projects, USAF

- VI. It is recommended that each Agency maintain a list of all cleared personnel within their respective organizations who have been briefed on this cover plan.

- VII. The Central Intelligence Agency will notify each Agency of any change to this plan, and in turn requests that any alterations be coordinated with the CIA prior to implementation.

CIA CONTACT : James L. Vining - D-9 Cover officer

OFFICE TELEPHONE : Code 143 - 351-5344

CIA CONTROL NUMBER : Code 143 - 351-5771

DD FORM NUMBER : 389-5823

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